

CRISIS IS AT HAND.

Either War or Peace Will be Determined On This Week.

GREAT GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION.

No Absolute Day has Yet Been Announced When the President's Message is to be Sent to Congress—Will not be Communicated To-Day, and it May be Thursday—Delay is Welcomed by Some, While Others are Chafing Under Restraint—The Probability of Foreign Mediation—No Overtures Have Yet Been Made.

WASHINGTON, April 3.—THE OPINION, ALMOST UNIVERSALLY HELD IN WASHINGTON TO-NIGHT BY LEADING PUBLIC MEN AND DIPLOMATS, IS THAT THE CRISIS WILL REACH ITS CLIMAX THIS WEEK AND THAT THE QUESTION OF WAR OR PEACE WILL BE DETERMINED WITHIN THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS.

Senators and representatives met and conferred all day about the gravity of the situation, and at the white house the President consulted with several members of his cabinet and other confidential advisers regarding the message which he is preparing to send to congress.

At the state, war and navy building active work was going on, and altogether it has been a day of suppressed feeling. No absolute day has yet been announced when the message is to be sent to congress and all that seems to be absolutely certain to-night is that it will not go in to-morrow, Tuesday possibly, but more probably Wednesday, or perhaps Thursday.

Welcome Every Hour of Delay. In addition to the physical work of preparing the comprehensive document upon which the President expects to rest America's case with the world, there are other reasons why those in charge of the war preparations will welcome every hour's delay. WAR MATERIAL WHICH WE HAVE ORDERED ABROAD IS NOT YET SHIPPED, AND THE FACTORIES IN THIS COUNTRY WHICH ARE WORKING NIGHT AND DAY MAKING POWDER AND PROJECTILES ARE ANXIOUS FOR DELAY. Some of the factories in Connecticut have telegraphed Representative Hill urging all the delay possible. They say every day now is precious.

There is still a divergence of opinion as to what the President will recommend in his message; indeed there seems to be still a question as to whether the President will make any specific recommendations. Some of his most intimate friends, however, assert emphatically that his recommendations will be specific and vigorous and such that his party and country could willingly follow when he points the way.

One of these said to-night that the President in his strong desire for peace and his earnest hope that war might possibly be avoided was yielding somewhat to the sentiment of the leaders of his party and the country. He has not given up hope yet that hostilities may be averted. There are those who believe the President has not yet made up his mind as to the exact course he will pursue, and there seems to be a question as to whether the consular reports and the diplomatic correspondence is to be transmitted with the message.

A Trying Suspense. The suspense caused by the necessary delay in the preparation of the message is very trying upon members of both houses and the most universally discussed question in Washington to-night is whether congress can be re-strained until the message is transmitted. All realize the difficult and arduous task of preparing our case for the world's inspection and the care which must be exercised, and there seems to be no disposition to "unduly" hasten the President. The party leaders are extremely anxious to avoid a breach with the executive, as would occur if congress were to take the initiative.

After a careful canvass of the situation to-day they believe the radical Republicans can be held in line a few days longer, until Wednesday at least.

The conference of Republicans of the house who have been insisting on prompt action, held another meeting to-morrow night. While many of them are now in favor of giving the President more leeway than they were last week, it is realized that twenty-five Republican votes in the house would, with the Democratic and Populist votes, be sufficient to act. It can be pretty confidently asserted that all the Republicans of the house, with possible exceptions which could be counted on the fingers of one hand, can be controlled until Wednesday. After that what might happen if the President asks for further delay is problematical. Mr. Brownwell, of Ohio, for instance, who says he hopes he will not be obliged to part company with the Democrats if necessary to overrule the speaker after Wednesday. Mr. Cooper, of Wisconsin, has made a similar statement.

Will Agree with the Senate. The Republicans of the house committee on foreign affairs has held informal meetings to-day and have practically agreed to report a resolution similar to that agreed upon by the foreign relations committee of the senate. The house resolutions will probably follow the language of those of the senate regarding the blowing up of the Maine.

These resolutions will be practically agreed upon by the committee to-morrow, but will not be reported until the President sends his message to Congress, although there is at least one of the Republicans of the committee who is in favor of formally reporting them to-morrow.

Mr. Adams, the acting chairman of the committee, in the absence of Mr. Pitt, saw the President to-day and informed him of the probable action of the committee. All the Republicans called upon Mr. Pitt at his residence during the day.

Mr. Grout, (Rep., Vermont), said that while some of the Republicans of the house were very impatient he thought they would restrain themselves if the President desired a few days additional. Mr. Grout has prepared a resolution which he will introduce to-morrow, appropriating \$1,000,000 to raise the hull of the Maine.

"IF SHE WAS BLOWN UP," SAID HE, "WE CAN WELL AFFORD TO

nent peace between the United States and Spain, a peace that should be built upon bed-rock conditions; conditions of Justice to Cuba, with assured protection to the great American interests in that island.

"I have labored steadily to obtain this result. I have never lost my faith, and, doubtful as conditions may seem to-day, I still believe these great and good purposes of my President may yet be secured. I shall not desert from my labors for a just and honorable peace until the guns actually open fire; and my faith is still strong that war, with all its horrors, can be averted.

"Enough blood has been shed in Cuba already, and I cannot believe that the closing hours of the nineteenth century will be reddened by a conflict between Spain and the United States. My country asks for peace based upon conditions that shall make peace permanent and beneficent; and I have faith that Spain will yet do what is necessary to assure justice of Cuba. And with justice, peace is certain."

THE POPE'S MEDIATION

Most Emphatically Denied by the State Department and at the White House.

MADRID, April 2.—Senor Capdepon, minister of the interior, states officially that the pope has accepted the task of mediation between Spain and the United States at the suggestion of the latter, both nations accepting his mediation.

WASHINGTON, April 3.—Assistant Secretary of State Day has authorized an official denial of the statement that the pope is to mediate between this country and Spain.

At the white house the dispatch was promptly and emphatically denied.

AUTONOMISTS APPEAL

To the Insurgents for an Armistice for the Purpose of Arriving at Terms of Peace.

WASHINGTON, April 3.—The Spanish minister has received a dispatch from Havana stating that the autonomists appeal to the insurgents, asking to arrange an armistice, for the purpose of arriving at terms of peace.

The full text of the message could not be secured to-night, as its translation was not made at the large majority of the insurgents are appealed to on the ground that they are all Cubans, and should unite for peace and liberty, which all want. The appeal also states that Spain is willing to enlarge the present scope of autonomy, and will suggest such a plan to the cortes, which is soon to meet.

THE WEEK IN CONGRESS.

Forecast of Business to be Transacted, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Will Not Report on Cuban Situation Before Wednesday.

WASHINGTON, April 3.—The expectation in the senate is that the report of the committee on foreign relations on the Cuban situation will be made to the senate not later than Wednesday, and if the report should be made at that time the probabilities are that will engage the greater share of the senate's time for the remainder of the week.

The committee will make an effort to secure action upon the resolutions which it will report without having them debated, but with very little probability of success. Undoubtedly a large majority of the members of the senate are favorable to some declaration apropos of the Cuban situation, but there is certain to be differences of opinion on the course to be pursued and on the language to be used, which will be sufficient to prevent immediate action except in one contingency. This contingency is the possibility of an agreement as to details between the President and the committee. If the committee's report should prove to be in accord with the President's recommendations, the senate likely would adopt the resolutions brought in without debating them.

There is, however, a considerable element in the senate which is opposed to war except as a last extremity and there are several others who think there ought to be delay of at least a week or ten days before action is taken in Congress in order to insure the safe landing of ships and war supplies now on their way to this country from Europe.

The committee on foreign relations is not connected with this line of reasoning, and members urge that Spain is not better prepared for hostilities than are we. The members of the committee do not expect the President's message before Tuesday and they are prepared to wait until Wednesday. Under great pressure there might be a delay beyond that time, but a request for delay would cause great restiveness on the part of a majority of the committee. While desirous of giving the President all the time he may actually require for the preparation of his message, they are very impatient of the outside influence which is being exerted to hold them in check. This pressure is in the shape of letters and telegrams from people throughout the country who are opposed to a war policy and with these the members of the committee are being flooded.

"The writers," a member of the committee said to-day, "generally ask us to maintain an 'honorable' peace." Of course we all want an honorable peace, but the time has gone by when that can be secured under existing conditions in Cuba. We cannot allow our conduct to be controlled by such expressions.

When the President's message is received it will, on Senator Davis' motion be referred to the committee on foreign relations which may bring in its report later in the day, or it may not do so until the following day. So far as it is informed as to the probable line of the President's communication, the committee is now prepared to report, but the members realize that there may be some detail of the message that will require careful consideration, and in that event they will give more time to it than an hour or two on the day of its presentation.

Unless there is a change in the committee's conclusions after the President is heard from, the resolutions reported will recommend the recognition of independence with a declaration for armed intervention to make independence practicable. They will also include the Maine explosion as one of the causes set forth for this action. The resolutions will be accompanied by a carefully drawn report written by Senator Davis justifying them.

For the rest, the senate will probably give its attention to appropriation bills and miscellaneous measures on the calendar.

There is little in the way of a programme for the house this week. Everything awaits upon the President's message, and the momentous events which are to follow its presentation. To-morrow the bill for the reorganization of the army is to be called up. Chairman Hull, of the military committee, believes it will be passed without opposition. It is considered a part of the war preparations.

Spanish Ships in Bad Condition.

LONDON, April 3.—The correspondent of the Associated Press has ascertained from reliable sources that some of the Spanish ships are in bad condition. The Pelayo started from Toulon for Cartagena last night in tow, with 15 French workmen on board fixing up her boilers and making other repairs. The Emperor Carlos V. started yesterday from the Seignship building yards at Havre for Ferrol, with a turret out of position, and her guns unmounted. Neither ship will be ready for service for a month. They have left French waters presumably in the fear that war might begin before the repairs were finished, in which event they would not be permitted to leave.

Soldiers from West Virginia.

MORGANTOWN, W. Va., April 2.—Colonel Clarence Smith, commanding the First regiment of the West Virginia National Guard, to-day advised the United States military authorities that he would tender the full strength of the regiment in the event of war.

AWFUL LOSS OF LIFE

At Shawneetown, Illinois, by the Breaking of the Levee.

TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE WERE DROWNED

By the Sudden Inrush of the Waters—The Johnstown, Pa., Disaster Paralleled—All Telegraph and Telephone Communication With the Stricken City Shut Off—The Flood Breaks Upon the Community Like a Tidal Wave.

ST. LOUIS, Mo., April 3.—A special to the Republic from Girard, Ill., says: A telephone message has been received here from Shawneetown, Ill., saying that at 4:30 o'clock this afternoon the levee above the city broke and the city is inundated. The water has backed up for five miles and rushed down upon the city like a tidal wave.

After the message was received telephone and telegraph communication with Shawneetown was suddenly cut off, which tends to confirm the report. Nothing more has been learned. It is rumored that over two hundred lives were lost, although it is believed this estimate is too large.

Report Confirmed.

CHICAGO, April 4.—At 12:30 to-night the operator in the long distance telephone company's office at Mt. Vernon, Ind., informed the Associated Press that the estimate on the loss of life at Shawneetown was, at that hour, 200. Mt. Vernon is but thirty miles from Shawneetown, and the information on which the estimate is based is believed to be reliable.

The operator stated that the company's wires to the stricken city failed soon after 4 o'clock in the afternoon. At that hour it was known that the dam was giving way, but it was not thought it would go to pieces quickly enough to cause loss of life. By 8 o'clock it was known in Mt. Vernon that many people had been drowned, the estimate then being one hundred.

A relief boat, bearing food, blankets and surgeons, was started down the river and was expected to reach Shawneetown before morning. Gradually the reports of loss of life increased the estimates, stories coming from various points near the scene of the flood showing clearly that the disaster was far more serious than at first believed.

People from Mt. Vernon and the surrounding country besieged the telephones and telegraph office, frantic for tidings from relatives and friends in the flooded town. No attempt at an accurate list of the lost was possible, however, and the crowds stood all night before the bulletin boards on which were posted the meagre reports being received.

Terrific Devastation.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., April 3.—A special to the Courier-Journal from Evansville, Ind., says: Shawneetown is seventy-five miles below Evansville on the Ohio river. Houses were turned and tossed about like boxes. The people were not warned of the break and for that reason so many were caught. Those at home sought refuge in second stories and on house tops. Those in the streets were carried before the avalanche of water and probably a majority were drowned. Citizens came from the place by skiffs to a telephone several miles away and asked for aid from Evansville. They said that more than 200 people were drowned and they had reason to believe it would reach 500 or even 1,000. The water stands from twenty to thirty feet all over the town.

There are, of course, no fire or light in the place, and total darkness envelops the desolated scene. Consequently it was impossible for them to have anything like definite information. The men quickly left the telephone and no communication has since been had with the place. All telephone and telegraph wires are now down and outside communication appears to be impossible.

At 10 o'clock to-night two steamboats and a couple of tugs started for Shawneetown under a full head of steam and it is expected some of them will arrive there by 2 o'clock in the morning. They carry large supplies of food and blankets quickly collected by the city officials.

250 Lives Lost.

CHICAGO, April 3.—A special to the Record from Cypress Junction, Ill., says: Two hundred and fifty persons were drowned to-day by the inundation of Shawneetown, six miles from this place. The north levee broke at 4:20 this afternoon and the Ohio river flowed over the town and many feet deep.

Scores of houses are floating about to-night and many persons are clinging to the wreckage in the hope that rescuers will soon appear with boats to take them to places of safety.

All communication with the town is cut off. Trains cannot reach here and telephone and telegraph wires are down.

The first report that reached here was that the entire population had been drowned, but this is not confirmed.

The levee was built by the government and was regarded as impregnable, hence the people had taken no precautions against a possible flood.

MADRID GOSSIP

About Alliance Between This Country and Great Britain.

LONDON, April 4.—The Madrid correspondent of the Daily Mail telegraphing Saturday, says:

"Information has been received here to the effect that an alliance has been conclusively concluded by England and America for mutual action in the far east alone. As a matter of fact, such an alliance, if concluded, would influence considerably any possible conflict between America and Spain.

"There is also a report current that France and other powers, including England, propose that the Cuban people themselves should decide the Cuban problem by a plebiscite, Cuba being a civilized country. In this connection it may be noted that one of the chief arguments in Spain's answer to the American demands is the solution of some of these questions belong to the Cuban people, who cannot decide upon them until the Cuban parliament meets on May 4.

"If Spain replied for them, the govern-

ment argues, she would undoubtedly usurp rights granted to Cuba by recent legislation.

"A battalion of engineers which had been ordered to the Canary island passed down the streets of Madrid to-night (Saturday) to entrain for Cadiz. The troops were cheered enthusiastically by the crowd. Beyond this the most perfect calm prevails.

"The ministers who are desirous of being informed as to the latest news from America met again to-day and both the official and private dispatches were read. Senor Polo y Bernabe telegraphed from Washington that he considered President McKinley is being carried away by congress. The President, in the opinion of the Spanish minister, will decline all responsibility for the course events will take, while congress will accept it. He asserts that the affairs of Spain and Cuba will be discussed on Monday.

THE EASTER BULL FIGHT

Seems to Engage the Enthusiasm of the People of Spain More than Patriotic Outbursts—The Queen Regent's Mock Heretics.

MADRID, via Bayonne, France, April 3.—Despite the efforts of the press to work up patriotic enthusiasm, the public seems indifferent to the situation. Exceeding among officials and officers it is rarely discussed. Apparently the people are chiefly interested in the result of a big lottery just announced and in the preparations for an extraordinary bull fight on Easter Sunday, at which celebration torchers from all parts of Spain will perform.

The people do not wish war; rather are indifferent, as they always have one in progress somewhere and do not regard a war with the United States as different from the others. The feeling that exists here exists also throughout the provinces.

Poulney Bigelow writes from Barcelona that, with two other Americans, he has just completed a bicycle tour from San Sebastian, through Madrid, to Alicante, in Valencia, clear across the widest part of the peninsula, and he says:

"I found less jingoism in the whole trip than in one block of the New York Bowery."

The queen regent is taking a very active part in the negotiations and has thoroughly identified herself with the war section of the cabinet. Her attitude is much approved by the officials in the army, and has undoubtedly strengthened the dynasty for the time being. Her majesty is reported to have told Senor Sagasta:

More Fusion.

"I received from my husband a heritage for our son, and will never agree to have that heritage curtailed."

Senor Sagasta said to a friend after Tuesday's council at the palace: "We went in, seven men to see one woman, and emerged seven women, leaving the man inside," meaning that they went in disposed to yield, but that the queen's patriotism and firmness inspired them. At the same time it is reported that the queen regent is doing much to avoid a rupture. The activity of Count Dubsky, the Austrian ambassador, in this direction within the last two days is said to be inspired from the palace. He has visited United States Minister Woodford and a prominent member of the cabinet.

Apparently there is a pessimistic feeling at the United States legation to-day.

The majority of the newspapers here to-day regard war as inevitable. They think General Stewart L. Woodford has communicated a final answer to the government. The Liberal says:

"It is clear that no concession will satisfy the United States except the independence of Cuba, and we had better immediately end the uncertainty."

The whole article of the Liberal on the subject is bellicose in tone.

The Palsaisers that "great uneasiness prevails at Washington concerning the attitude of the southern states in case of war with Spain, and also because the Spaniards are organizing in Mexico to invade the states lately wrested from the Mexican republic."

In conclusion, the Palsaisers that: "It will not be all beer and skittles for the United States."

Much excitement was caused during the day by the receipt of a dispatch saying it is expected that the passports of the Spanish minister at Washington will be handed to him on Tuesday.

Rev. Dr. Still Convalescent.

NEW YORK, April 3.—Rev. Dr. John Hall, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church, is convalescing. He has passed through any danger period that may have existed and at his residence to-day it was said he contemplated participating in communion services next Sunday. Dr. Hall also caused it to be announced from the pulpit of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church that he would participate in some of the church meetings this week.

Movements of Steamships.

NEW YORK—Arrived—Rotterdam, Rotterdam; La Bretagne, Havre.

Weather Forecast for To-day.

For Western Pennsylvania, threatening weather; winds becoming fresh easterly. For West Virginia and Ohio, threatening weather, probably followed by rain Monday night; warmer; fresh southeasterly winds.

Local Temperature.

The temperature Saturday as observed by C. Schepel, druggist, corner Market and Fourteenth streets, was as follows:

7 a. m.	41	3 p. m.	62
9 a. m.	40	7 p. m.	41
12 m.	40	10 p. m.	41

SUNDAY.

7 a. m.	39	3 p. m.	48
9 a. m.	38	7 p. m.	43
12 m.	41	10 p. m.	41

Weather—Fair.